connected with the labor movement, to be our reporter. The party named Hilferding as its spokesman. I was slated to open the panel discussion with a rebuttal of Hilferding's arguments.

The conference was held in a large room in the Reichstag building. Everyone sat around a horseshoe-shaped table covered with green cloth. Wells occupied the chair, with the union people at his right and the Reichstag members at his left. Red in the face, he opened the discussion grimly. "It is time to end this silly dispute. Inflation-deflation, public works . . . I do not know what. . . . This nonsense must be stopped."

Colm spoke in an academic way, developing a theory that since has become commonplace. The price level and volume of economic activities can be regulated by monetary and credit measures. Public works is the best, and politically the most expedient, approach to the problem.

Hilferding was the next speaker. "Colm and Woytinsky," he said, "are questioning the very foundations of our program, Marx's theory of labor value. Our program rests on the conviction that labor, and labor alone, creates value. Prices deviate from labor values under the impact of the interplay of supply and demand. Depressions result from the anarchy of the capitalist system. Either they come to an end or they must lead to the collapse of this system. If Colm and Woytinsky think they can mitigate a depression by public works, they are merely showing that they are not Marxists."

My first thought was that Hilferding could not have taken that nonsense seriously. Obviously, he had a limitless contempt for his listeners and did not condescend to argue before them but appealed to the clichés in their brains. A score of deputies listened to him as to an oracle. Wells sat motionless in his armchair, his eyes closed and his head sunk on his breast. Hilferding ended with an appeal to the party to rise united to the defense of a sound currency and Marxism.

I began my rebuttal. "The flood of unemployment is rising, the people are at the end of their patience. The workers, holding us responsible for their misery, are deserting the party to join the Communists and Nazis. We are losing ground. There is no time to waste. Something must be done before it is too late. Our plan has nothing to do with any particular value theory. Any party can execute it. And it will be executed. The only question is whether we take the initiative or leave it to our enemies. It is not true—"

I felt that I was gaining the audience, but suddenly a deafening noise came from the head of the table. Wells was pounding the desk with both fists and shouting, "Shut up! I will not permit—"